

**SITUATION REPORT NO. 5**  
**INCIDENT NO. 2001- 005**  
**DATE: April 6, 2001      TIME: 4:00 p.m.**

**TO:** Governor John Hoeven  
State Capitol  
Bismarck, N.D. 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring Flooding -- Above normal fall precipitation and a high soil moisture content, compounded by eight years of prior flooding, have resulted in a strong probability for Devils Lake to continue its historic rise. Forecasters expect the Red River of the North to rise several feet above flood stage at gauging locations beginning near Wahpeton this weekend. Additionally, hydrologists for the National Weather Service (NWS) expect moderate to major spring flooding to occur along the Pembina River. Flooding has already occurred along the Sheyenne, Maple, Souris and James Rivers.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No deaths or injuries have been reported.
3. DAMAGES: A potent spring storm, forecasted for this weekend, threatens to push the Red River and its tributaries to higher levels. Forecasts by the Grand Forks Office of the National Weather Service (NWS) call for significant precipitation of up to 1.5 inches of rain. With several rivers already above flood stage and most others on the rise, the NWS expects river flooding to become more widespread this weekend. Currently, hydrologists have issued flood warnings for the Red River at Wahpeton, Fargo, Halstad and East Grand Forks, and flash flood watches throughout the valley. In Wahpeton, flood water levels are expected to exceed the 1997 flood of record. Downstream levels are not expected to be at record levels because local contributions from snowmelt will be less than in the Wahpeton area.

The NWS expects the Red River at Wahpeton to crest at 19.5 feet on April 10-11; flood of record, set in 1997, was 19.42 feet. The Red River begins at Wahpeton-Breckenridge at the confluence of the Bois de Sioux and the Ottertail Rivers. NWS officials anticipate that the potential exists for both rivers to crest simultaneously, which will result in a rapid rise in Red River levels in the Wahpeton area. The level on April 6 measured 7.98 feet; flood stage is 10 feet. Officials expect a sustained level at Wahpeton during an extended period because of additional precipitation and releases from the Lake Traverse Dam on the Bois de Sioux River and Lake Orwell on the Ottertail River.

Further downstream, the Red River is expected to rise at 34 to 36 feet at Fargo in mid-April. The river at Fargo measures 19.51 feet today; flood stage is 17 feet. Major flooding occurs in the Fargo-Moorhead area at levels above 32 feet. Widespread flooding occurs in parks and recreational areas along the river, and floodwaters overtop the dike at El Zagal Golf Course.

In Grand Forks, the river measures 28.5 feet today, one-half foot above flood stage. The river is expected to rise to 43 to 45 feet at Grand Forks after Easter. Major flooding occurs at 46 feet, which is one foot below the predicted crest level.

Areas of concern also include the Devils Lake Basin and the Pembina and Walsh County areas. NWS forecasts are not yet available for these areas.

In Richland County, overland and river flooding are overtopping bridges and roadways, resulting in washouts and other damages. Several roads and bridges have been closed because of floodwaters from the Wild Rice and Red Rivers and Antelope Creek.

Antelope Lake in Pierce County has risen three feet during the past six days, threatening three homes. Lake water has inundated a well and is threatening driveways. In White Township, water from the Black Slough is inundating nearby roadways.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: No change from previous reports.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: On April 6, Governor John Hoeven issued an emergency declaration for the State of North Dakota based on flood forecasts issued by the National Weather Service, flooding in the Souris, James, Red River and Devils Lake basins and the potential for substantial precipitation this weekend.

Governor Hoeven has requested emergency assistance from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, for cities along the Red River and its tributaries. Cities requiring immediate assistance include Wahpeton and Fargo, where the Red River is quickly rising to crest levels.

Based on the new forecast, the COE is elevating the levees in the city of Wahpeton. The COE recently contracted with private contractors to build approximately 10,000 lineal feet of emergency levees.

North Dakota National Guard units throughout the state have been alerted for potential flood fight assistance.

The Grand Forks Emergency Management Office has issued Levels I and II Flood Warnings based on forecasted rises on the Red River. A Level I warning is issued when the Red River reaches 28 feet or the NWS issues a flash flood advisory. A Level 2 warning is issued when the Red River reaches 35 feet or rises 2.5 feet per day.

In Pembina County, the city of Drayton has issued an emergency declaration.

Richland County officials have issued an emergency declaration.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No additional requests have been received.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: In addition to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, North Dakota Emergency Management and National Guard officials have been on-site in several areas.
9. OTHER: Appropriate state and local emergency operations plans have been implemented.

Situation Reports published by North Dakota Emergency Management are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is <http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

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Douglas C. Friez, State Director